

S.D. Family Focus

An update for South Dakota
Service Members &
Families!

July 2012



FREE National Park Passes for Active Duty Military

Active-duty military personnel and their families are able to enter every national park for **FREE** as part of an effort to thank service members and their families for the sacrifices they make.

The pass will be accepted at National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps sites that charge entrance or standard amenity fees.

For the full article on this visit the Fox News Website:

<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2012/05/15/military-families-to-get-free-national-parks-pass/>

Hero 2 Hired (H2H)

H2H is not just another job site. It is a project with a special mission to thank you for your service by helping you find your perfect career.

We know that searching for a new job is a big undertaking. H2H was created to make it easy for Reserve Component service members to connect to and find jobs with military-friendly companies who are looking for employees with your training and skills.

H2H offers the following job search tools:

- Job Search
- Military Skills Translator
- Career Assessment Survey
- Advice and Training
- Hiring Events
- Suggestion Box



For more information on H2H and to sign up check out the website <https://h2h.jobs>



Check out the online version of the ARNG Education Benefits Handbook. This guide provides information on the application procedures and benefits for all Army National Guard (ARNG) education programs http://issuu.com/sdngeeducation/docs/armng_education_benefits_handbook_oct_2011

National Guard Bureau Volunteer Training Team

The National Guard Bureau Volunteer Training Team (VTT) consists of volunteers that are helping with volunteerism within the National Guard and sister affiliates. Regular and effective training webinars are offered which helps create a standardized and professional Volunteer Corp and serves as a portal for volunteers to network with each other, paid staff and military members. This is done to provide education, promote effective communication and build leadership skills to enhance and support the lives of Military Members and their Families. It serves as the "HUB" to the volunteering network. For more information contact Tammy Chase at cbchase@venturecomm.net



The Sandwiched Generation: How to Cope

People in the “sandwiched generation” face unique challenges. They are “sandwiched” between caring for children and for aging parents. Many of these people also work. So, this generation must find ways to cope with the stress of juggling multiple responsibilities.

How do people cope?

A national study of dual-earner couples in the sandwiched generation by researchers at Portland State University found that these people generally cope in 3 ways:

- Changing levels of involvement
- Focusing on emotional health
- Prioritizing and planning

Some methods of coping produce more positive outcomes than others.



Changing levels of involvement

This can entail either reducing your involvement in activities or increasing other people’s involvement to help meet family demands. At home, becoming less involved might mean cutting back on some activities, such as missing soccer games or piano recitals. But research has shown that withdrawing generally does not improve a person’s ability to manage multiple demands. It actually may make matters worse. A person’s well-being may suffer due to decreasing family activities.

On the other hand, increasing others’ involvement has been shown to help balance multiple family demands. Some examples of coping this way include enlisting the help of friends and family, hiring someone to clean the house or asking grandparents to watch the kids occasionally.

Focusing on emotional health

This may involve decreasing expectations of yourself: taking one day at a time, not feeling guilty and knowing that it’s OK if you can’t do everything. You may seek emotional support from family members, friends or support groups. Using humor and maintaining a positive attitude also can help you cope. This can help improve your ability to manage multiple family demands and increase your sense of well-being.

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Prioritizing and planning

Prioritizing short-term and long-term activities can help you deal with multiple roles. Prioritization helps you figure out not only what is really important, but also what you must take care of immediately and what you can postpone. Planning based on priorities, such as coordinating the work and school schedules and scheduling family events in advance, also can be very helpful. People who prioritize and plan have an easier time juggling family demands and feel happier.

What's the best method?

Remember that people in the sandwiched generation have many different ways to deal with multiple demands. The most effective ways of dealing with stress often include taking care of your emotional needs and prioritizing and planning your activities. So seek out the support that you need from family, friends or support groups. Remember that you probably can't do everything that you'd like to. Figure out what's most important to you and what you must do immediately. Put off things that can wait.

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Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP)

Congress passed, and the President has signed into law, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011. Included in this new law is the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP). VRAP offers up to 12 months of training assistance to unemployed Veterans. The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) and the Department of Labor (DOL) are working together to roll out this new program on July 1, 2012.

The VRAP offers 12 months of training assistance to Veterans who:

- Are at least 35 but no more than 60 years old
- Are unemployed on the date of application
- Received an other than dishonorable discharge
- Are not be eligible for any other VA education benefit program (e.g.: the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Assistance)
- Are not in receipt of VA compensation due to unemployability
- Are not enrolled in a federal or state job training program



The program is limited to 45,000 participants from July 1, 2012, through September 30, 2012, and 54,000 participants from October 1, 2012, through March 31, 2014. Participants may receive up to 12 months of assistance equal to the monthly full-time payment rate under the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty program (currently \$1,473 per month). DOL will offer employment assistance to every Veteran who participates upon completion of the program.

Participants must be enrolled in a VA approved program of education offered by a community college or technical school. The program must lead to an Associate Degree, Non-College Degree, or a Certificate, and train the Veteran for a high demand occupation. VRAP will provide training for programs of education that lead to a high demand occupation, as determined by the Department of Labor.

We are accepting VRAP applications now. Please visit <http://benefits.va.gov/vow/education.htm> to apply. Remember, to complete the application, you will need to know your direct deposit information (bank routing number and account number), the name and location of your school, the program you wish to pursue, and the applicable high demand occupation.

A Letter to My Younger Milspouse Self

Posted by Blog Brigade on May 21, 2012 at 08:00 May 212012

Generally, I am a positive, happy person. Ask anyone (but my family members; they are all jaded). However, there are some things I wish I could share with myself, twenty plus years ago, when I first became a military spouse. Unless the flux capacitor DOES exist and Doc Brown shows up with his time traveling machine, I'll share my letter with you.

Dear Kelli,

First of all congratulations on that adorable fellow you managed to snag. He will be very good to you and your children. Remember that when he forgets to tell you in about two years when he says he'll be home at 6 p.m., he means 0600 the NEXT morning so don't freak out. However, go ahead and call the barracks and his Lieutenant at 0430 because your adorable fellow REALLY enjoyed the attention that got him. And don't worry about the number of children.

Deployments. Never assume you know what you are doing. Every deployment is new, a different time in your life, and will present new challenges. Take advantage of whatever is being offered in the way of education, understanding, and support. Please never say, "I've done this before and I don't need that." It's just asking for trouble. The sun comes up every day and sets each evening. How you choose to proceed in between will define who you are and who your children will become. Your true strength will shine through in those darker moments. Melt down as necessary. Just be selective where you have a fit. For instance, the hospital, front office of your children's school, or a city park is not the best place to fall apart. Consider the privacy of your bedroom, on a friend's shoulder, or curled up next to your mom. Then you pick yourself up and march forward. That's who you are—strong but smart enough to seek help when needed. Seriously, it's okay to not be okay sometimes. It's just not okay to stay there for too long.

Deployments or other types of separations do come to an end. You will never get everything done you wanted to or be that perfect dress size. Don't worry about that too much. Your husband has missed YOU, not your sundress. Never assume a three-week separation is a piece of cake. A lot can happen in three weeks. Warranties are GOOD and Lacrosse sticks in the house BAD.

Marriage in the Military. Communicate—ALWAYS—even when things are hard to hear. Never assume he knows what you are thinking. You will be WRONG. Communication is going to have to be creative sometimes. Duty, separations, children, work, and the laundry will all conspire to make you just give up, but you won't. Be willing to hear him, not just listen. He will really try to hear you, but keep it straight forward and to the point. He is going to stop listening after twenty minutes. Break it up if you have too. Don't stop writing letters. A hand written letter just can't be replaced. Oh, by the way, way to go on some homemade perfume stationary. The entire berthing area on that LPD-9 smelled NICE for several weeks. His buddies really appreciated that one; this becomes a classic Kelli tale. Nurture your relationship with each other. No child has ever said my parents loved each other too much. They will only benefit from the care you give to each other. And no, I'm still not telling you how many there will be.

The Culture. You will do well, but you could do better. Knowing your entitlements, benefits, and the way things work will not only help your family successfully navigate through many years of service, but will help them flourish and grow in ways you cannot now understand.

Other Spouses. Take time to listen and thank them. They will inspire you, motivate you, and teach you. Don't discount their wisdom too quickly. That being said, trust in yourself. You are smarter and stronger than you know. It will just take some experiences for you to really believe this. You will amaze yourself. Go ahead; be amazed. You'll deserve it, especially during deployments.

Children. Love them, teach them, correct them, and then just love them some more. You have to be their mom, their dad, their teacher, their doctor, their counselor, and so forth. And you CAN do it. Yes you can. Stop it; you are NOT ruining them for life. They are going to be beautiful and smart and funny. They will astound you and you will be in awe of them. Most importantly, they will need you to love them the hardest and fiercest when they are the most unlovable. A few of these times will be during deployments, PCS moves, all three years of middle school, puberty in general, and finals week, yours and theirs. They are stronger than they think and you will be the one to teach them that.

Moving. It happens and it is a double-edged sword of excitement and grief. You will leave pieces of yourself everywhere you live and take pieces of everywhere you have lived with you. Don't stop making those connections with those who come into your life just because goodbyes are inevitable. Your life will be richer because of those people. DO go see everything you can where you live, even if you have to make bologna sandwiches to take with you because you can't afford anything other than the gas. You will regret not having gone to the Redwoods when you were stationed at Camp Pendleton. You will regret not having visited Cloudcroft, New Mexico more often when you were at Ft. Bliss, and the lighthouses of Eastern Carolina are calling your name. Do it. Most importantly I am excited for you. The journey ahead is so much more than you imagine. The best part is the discovery along the way of who you are and what you are truly capable of. As far as the number of children, you'll know when you don't need to save the baby clothes anymore.

Love,
Kelli

Events

Yellow Ribbon Events

14-15 July 139th BSB 60 Day
21-22 July 200th EN 60 Day
28-29 July 189th AVN 30 Day
18-19 August 189th AVN 60 Day

Employer Support

27 July– 1/147th Live Fire Boss
Lift– Camp Ripley

SMFS Logo Contest Closes 15 August

Strong Bonds

18-19 August

7 Habits of Highly Effective Families

7 Habits of Highly Successful Singles

Laugh Your Way to a better Marriage

Call 605-737-6658 or 605-737-6009 for more
information

